Archie® ADVENTURE SERIES

NO.3 JAN. $1.00

THE ADVENTURES OF BAYOU BILLY™

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Post
PEBBLES CEREAL® PRESENTS
BEDROCK BOWL
WATCH ME TRICK FRED OUT OF HIS FRUITY PEBBLES!
HOO BOY! WHAT A BEGINNER!
OH, DARN!
ANOTHER GUTTER-BALL!
CLUNK!
OOH, IT'S FRED FLINTSTONE ;sigh;-- BOWLING LEGEND!
THAT'S ME! ;heh heh heh!;
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CAN YOU SHOW LI'L OLD ME HOW TO BOWL YOUR FAMOUS LUCKY STRIKE?
SURE! JUST WATCH!
ZIP!
Fruity PEBBLES
GENERAL FOODS
MMM-MM! THESE FRUITY PEBBLES ARE RIGHT UP MY ALLEY! THEY'RE--
FRUIT-A-ROOTY!
READY...
...AIM...
SNAP!
...AN' LET 'ER--
--GO--!
SLIP!
--WHOAHH!
YEOW!
SPROING
?
THWUMP!
BARNEY-?! MY PEBBLES!!!
PLOP!
Post Cocoa PEBBLES
Post Fruity PEBBLES
FACE IT, FRED...
THAT'S LIFE IN THE FAST LANE!
Post FRUITY AND COCOA PEBBLES®-- YABBA DABBA DELICIOUS!

SWAMP FEVER

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NEW ORLEANS...
THE BIG EASY, THE CRESCENT CITY...
THE CITY THAT CARE FORGOT...
RIGHT NOW, I'D CALL IT ANOTHER NAME...

...A CITY UNDER SIEGE!
WE'VE GOT THE PLACE SURROUNDED, SHERIFF!
GOOD! THIS TIME, BLACKIE BLUE AIN'T GETTIN' AWAY SO EASY-LIKE!

BANG!
LOOK OUT! HERE HE COMES!
BRATT-A TATTA-TAT
BAM!
BLAM!
LET 'YM HAVE IT!

GEEZ! HE'S COMIN' RIGHT FOR US! HE'S--!
TAKKA-TAKKA TAKKA
BAM
KA-CHOW!
BLAM!

HOLD YOUR FIRE! HOLD YOUR FIRE--!!
YOW--! TH' SUCKUH BIT ME!!
SOMEBODY STOP HIM!
HE'S ALL OVER US-- LIKE A CHEAP SUIT!
YOU STOP HIM!

EEE-YOOORR?
SHERIFF
S-SAINTS PRE-PRESERVE M-ME!

AAAAARRGH!
N-NO! NO--!!
SKRUNCH!

GAAA--!!
NYAAARGHH!
!?

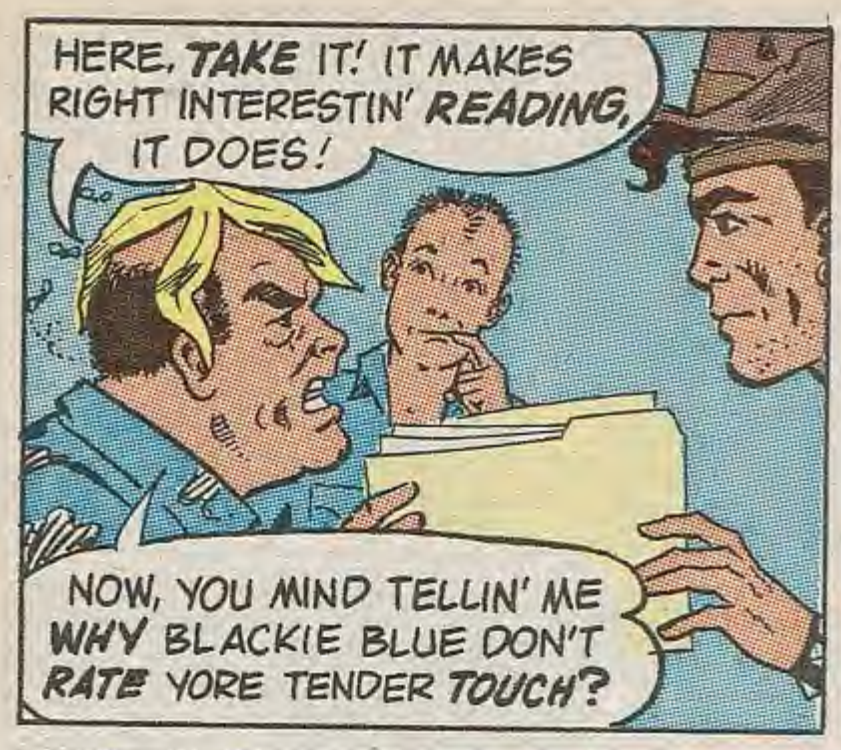
EY! HE'S GETTING AWAY!
STOP HIM-- FAST!
HOW!
SPLANG!
I AIN'T NEVER SEEN A MAN JUMP LIKE THAT!
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK BLACKIE BLUE'S A MAN?!
THUNK
KER-BLANG!
POW!
DUMPSTER DAN SEZ: "Put litter in its place!

I CAN HEAR THE RUCKUS FOUR BLOCKS AWAY! I GO THERE, FIGURE MAYBE THE POLICE CAN USE A HAND!
HEY, SHERIFF! WHERE Y'AT?
I'M NECK-DEEP IN GARBAGE, BILLY! THAT'S WHERE I'M AT!

I HELP THE SHERIFF OUT OF THE DUMPSTER! HE'S SEEN BETTER DAYS!
GET ME OUTTA THIS!
SMELLED BETTER, TOO!
I NEED YOU TO BRING IN BLACKIE BLUE, RIGHT QUICK!
THERE'S A $25,000 REE-WARD FOR HIM!

I DON'T WANT THE ASSIGNMENT, BUT TAKE IT ANYWAY!
I CAN USE THE MONEY!
I'LL PUT TRACKER, BROADSIDE AND SURESHOT ON IT!
WHY YORE TEAM AND NOT YOU?

'CAUSE I'M BUSY!
WHAT YOU GOT ON, HIM?
A WHOLE FILE!


HERE, TAKE IT! IT MAKES RIGHT INTERESTIN' READING, IT DOES!
NOW, YOU MIND TELLIN' ME WHY BLACKIE BLUE DON'T RATE YORE TENDER TOUCH?

Y'SEE, FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, SHERIFF... ...I'M GONNA BE HUNTING DOWN THE MAN WHO ONCE MURDERED ME!
THE SHERIFF DOESN'T UNDERSTAND! I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO!

E-EX-EXCUSE ME, SIR! B-BUT THERE'S A BANANA PEEL ON YOUR HEAD!
TAP TAP TAP

I KNOW THERE'S A STINKIN' BANANA PEEL ON MY HEAD, DEPUTY!
FLAP!

WHAT'S YORE NAME, BOY
WHAT? WHAT?!
WHAT?!!

THE BOYS'RE OVER AT GREASE MONKEY'S GARAGE, HELPING HER BUILD A NEW MONSTER TRUCK!
I GIVE THEM A CALL!
TH' GIANT AUGER SHOULD BE RETRACTABLE!
THAT WAY, WE CAN USE THE CAB FOR DRILLING OR RAMMING!
YUP.
I'LL GET IT!
RRRINNG!

AL'S GARAGE AND TOWING! ALEXANDRA LA ROCHELLE SPEAKING!

ALEX? LISTEN UP, GREASE! SEND THE TEAM OVER NEAR THE GREENWOOD CEMETERY, BY CITY PARK!
THEY'RE GOING AFTER SOMEONE NAMED BLACKIE BLUE! PUT TRACKER ON HIS TRAIL--WHILE IT'S FRESH!

WHERE'LL YOU BE?
ON THE OTHER-SIDE OF THE RIVER, IN ALGIERS!
RAISING CAIN NO DOUBT!
OH, NO DOUBT 'BOUT IT, SUGAR!
ALGIERS! IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, IT'S THE KIND OF PLACE THAT'LL CHEW YOU UP AND SPIT YOU OUT BEFORE YOU KNOW IT!
I'M NOT AFRAID OF ALGIERS!
ALGIERS SHOULD BE AFRAID OF ME!
IT'S NOT HARD LOCATING "THE HIGH NOTE"!
The HIGH NOTE
...AND STAY OUT!!
:HIC:

IT'S THE BIGGEST DIVE ON THE BLOCK!
I GO IN.

I FIND WHO I'M LOOKIN' FOR.
I SIT.
WE TALK.

I DON'T SEEM TO 'MEMBER ASKIN' YOU TO JOIN ME, MISTER!
YOU DIDN'T.

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM!
:SNORT: NO. SHOULD I--?
IT'D MAKE THINGS A LOT EASIER!

GORDON ARMAMENTS HAS BEEN RECEIVING SHIPMENTS OF CERTAIN CHEMICALS! SOME OF THOSE CHEMICALS ARE BEIN' DIVERTED TO SWAMP GAS CHARLIE!
SO?

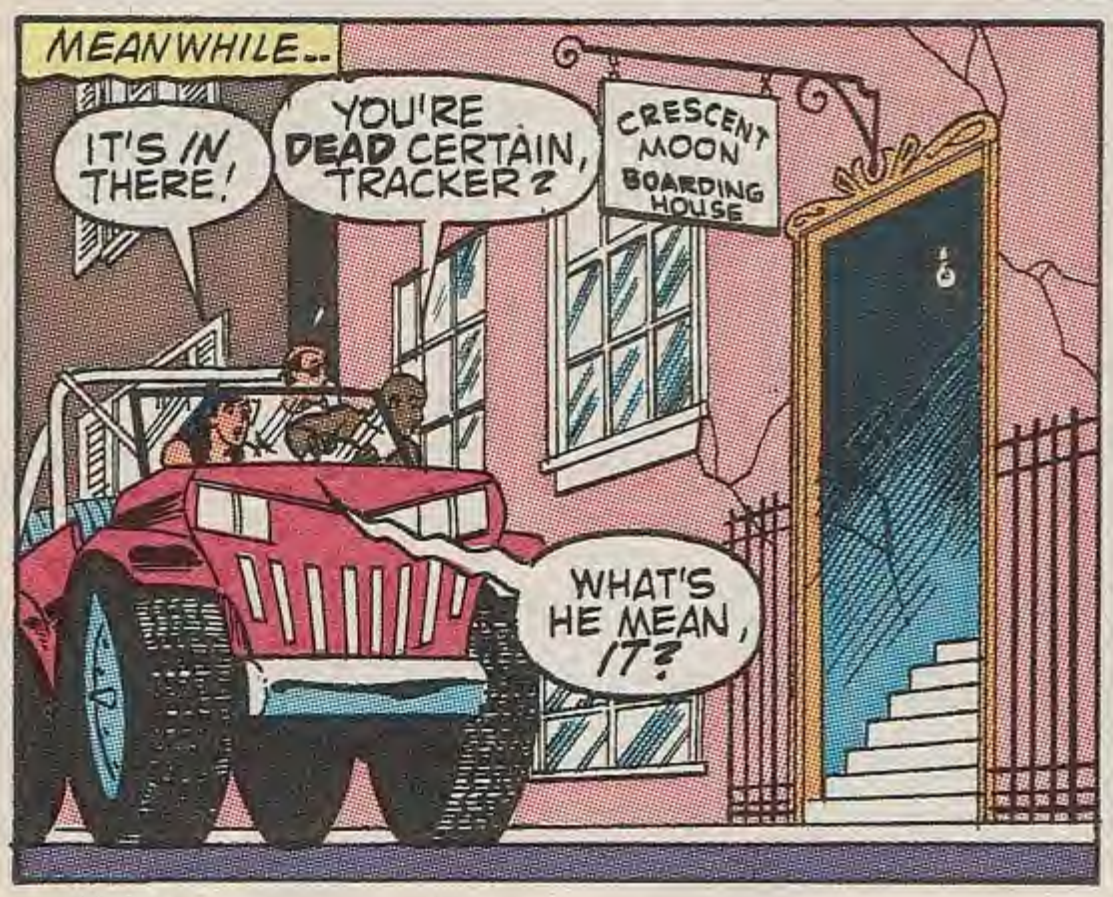
SO, YOUR BROTHER'S THE DRIVER! I WANT CHARLIE GASKILL'S ADDRESS!
MISTER, THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY YOU'RE GONNA GET IT!
SHOVE!

LET'S GO IN THE ALLEY AND DISCUSS IT!
SNAP
KRAK
IF YOU INSIST!

I ALLOW MYSELF TO BE ESCORTED OUTSIDE!
C'MON, RUNT! MOVE!
YOU'RE SURE YOU DON'T KNOW WHO I AM?
POS'TIVE!

POW!
BAM!
TOK!
KLUNK
BAM!
BIFF!
WAPP!
PHTHUMP!
KEE-RUNCH!

A MINUTE LATER, I HAVE MY ADDRESS!
DUST!
DUST!
DUST!
I THINK HE KNOWS WHO I AM, NOW!


MEANWHILE...
IT'S IN THERE!
YOU'RE DEAD CERTAIN, TRACKER?
CRESCENT MOON BOARDING HOUSE
WHAT'S HE MEAN, IT?

I CAN SMELL THE THING! IT'S UPSTAIRS, HERE!
BROADSIDE! WHAT'S HE MEAN, THING?
MEANS KEEP YOUR ARROWS READY!

CONTINUED

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SHHH! THE CREATURE'S INSIDE!
WHAT DOES HE MEAN, CREATURE?
CORK IT, SURESHOT!
YOU'RE MAKIN' ME JUMPY!

I'M MAKIN' YOU JUMPY?
GIMME A BREAK!
K-K-KREAK!

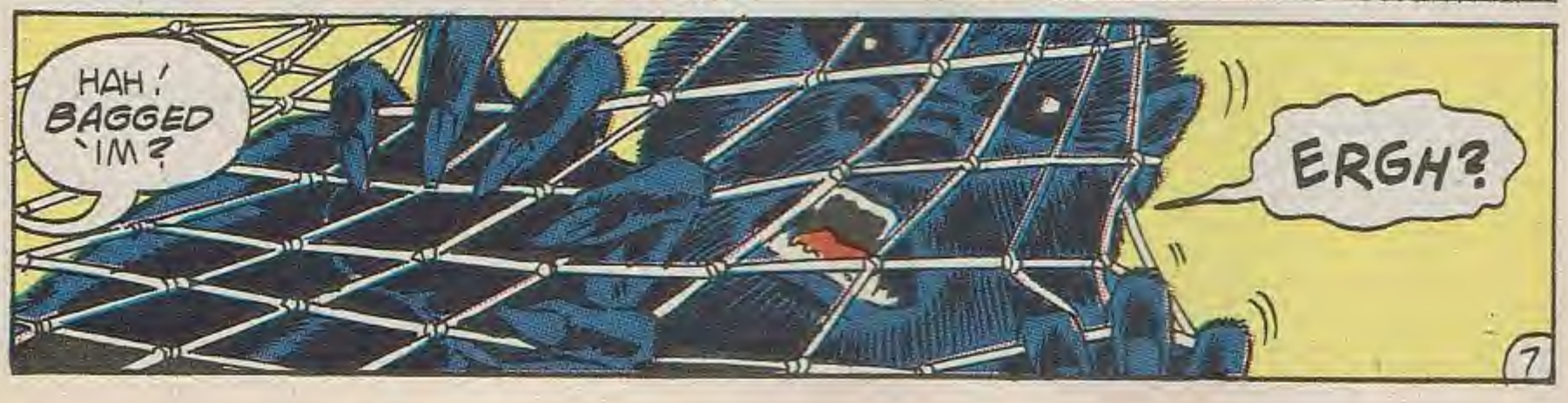
WELL ROOM'S EMPTY! NOBODY'S HOME!
LET'S GO!
NO, WAIT!
THE THING IS HIDING IN THE CLOSEST!

YEAH! AND THE BOOGEYMAN'S UNDER THE BED!
NOBODY HIDES IN THE CLOSET, NOWADAYS! I'LL PROVE IT!

SURESHOT! DON'T OPEN THAT DOOR!

NYARGH!
HOMINA HOMINA HOMINA!!!

I TOLD YOU, DON'T OPEN THAT DOOR!
BROADSIDE!
QUICK! YOUR NET!
WAY AHEAD OF YOU, TRACKER!


HAH! BAGGED 'IM?
ERGH?

GGGRRRR...
RIP-PP-P-P
ROARALR!
IT... IT RIPPED ITSELF FREE!!!
NO WAY! THAT NET KIN HOLD A WILD PANTHER!
I MADE IT M'SELF!
SHEESH! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
SURESHOT! WATCHA WAITIN' FOR? SHOOT IT--!!!
I'LL WING 'IM!
THAT OUGHTA SLOW 'IM DOWN!
ZIPPP
TWANG!
WHAT THE--?!
H-HE'S PLUCKIN' MY SHAFTS RIGHT OUTTA THE AIR--!
FAK!
TWANG
JUST OUR LUCK! WE'RE UP AGAINST AN ADULT MUTANT NINJA WEREWOLF!
I AIN'T NEVER SAW ANYTHIN' LIKE THAT BEFORE!
STAND BACK!
NYARRL!!
8

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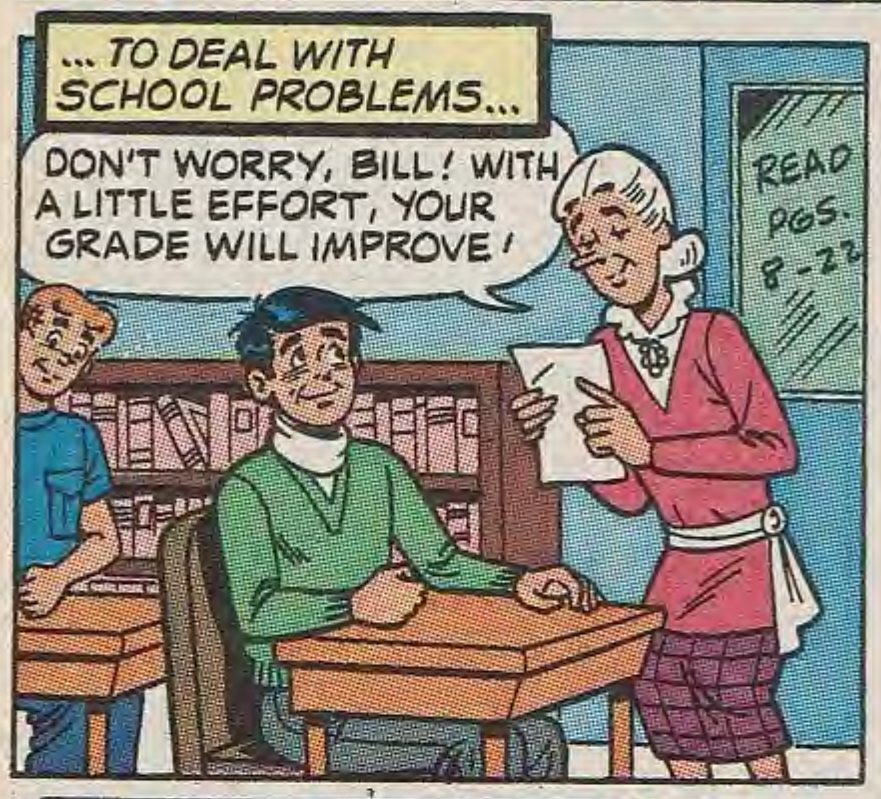

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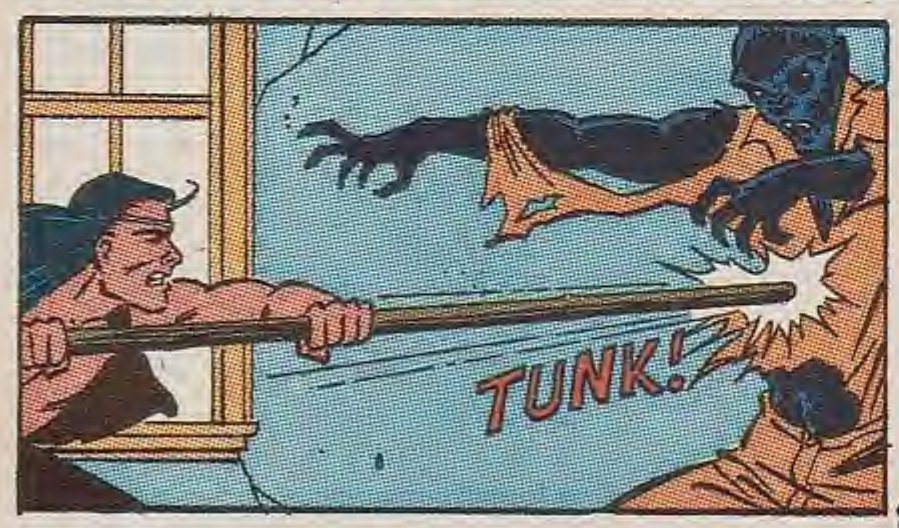
A PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGE FROM Archie® COMICS

I'LL STOP IT!
YOU DO THAT, TRACKER!
YEAH! MAYBE IT'S ALLERGIC TO WOOD!


TUNK!

SMACK!!

BOK!

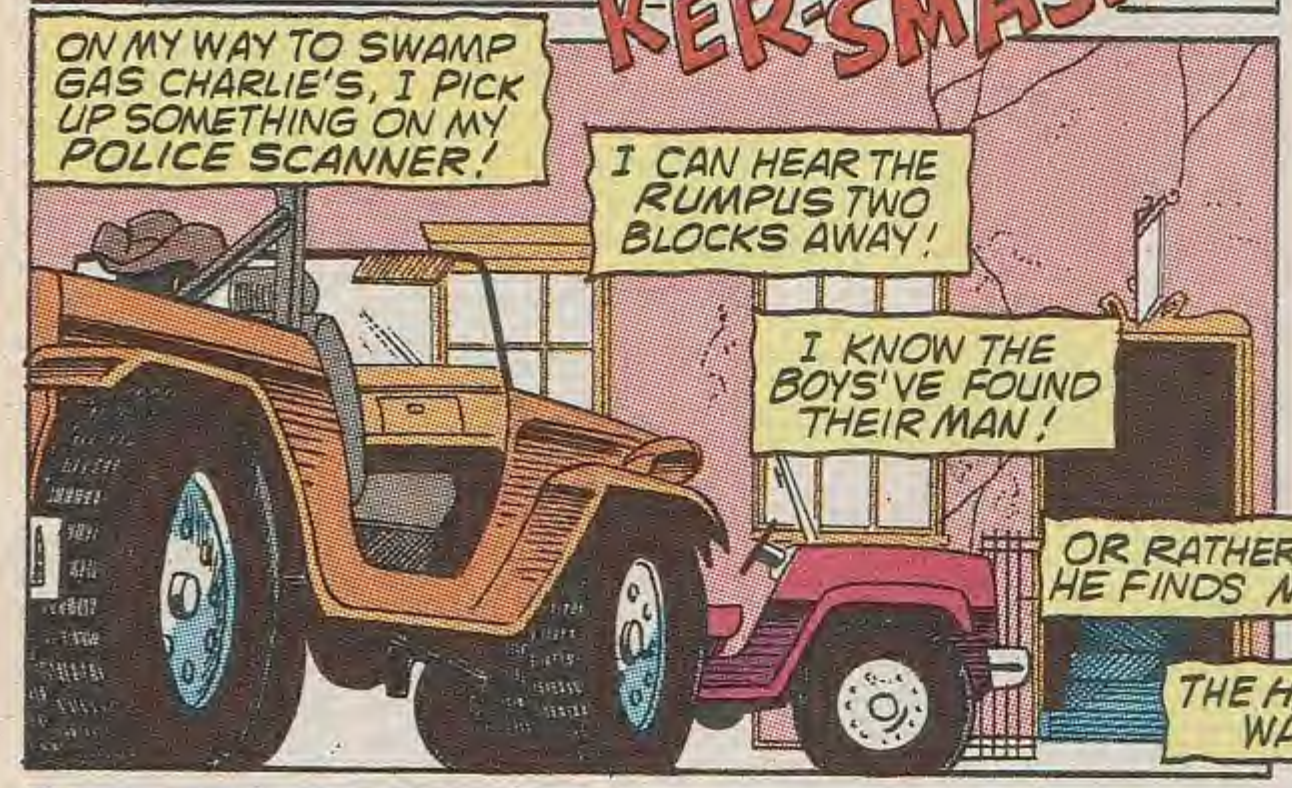
EEE-OOOoooo!!
MY OAK STAFF--!

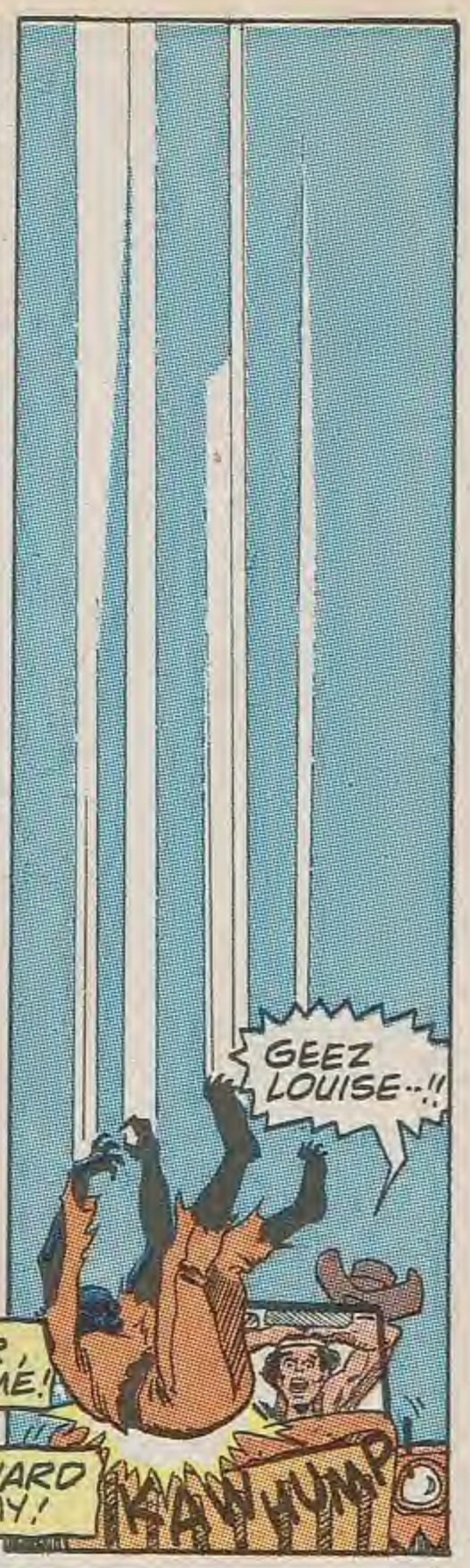
BAP BAP BAP BAP!
KEEP IT DOWN UP THERE!
I'M TRYIN' TO WATCH JEOPARDY!!
I'LL TAKE FUNNY BOOK TRIVIA FOR TWO HUNDRED!

SNAPP!
UH...
...OH!

GROARR!

KER-SMASHH!


ON MY WAY TO SWAMP GAS CHARLIE'S, I PICK UP SOMETHING ON MY POLICE SCANNER!
I CAN HEAR THE RUMPUS TWO BLOCKS AWAY!
I KNOW THE BOYS'VE FOUND THEIR MAN!
OR RATHER, HE FINDS ME!
THE HARD WAY!


GEEZ LOUISE--!!
KAWHUMP

Y'KNOW HOW A CARTOON CHARACTER, AFTER TAKING A BIG FALL, SHAKES HIS HEAD TO PULL HIMSELF TOGETHER?
THAT'S WHAT BLACKIE BLUE REMINDS ME OF!

ONLY BLACKIE BLUE'S NO CARTOON CHARACTER!
!
NOT HUMAN, EITHER!

DON'T KNOW WHAT HE IS!
DON'T MUCH CARE!

I DROP THE BILLY-MOBILE INTO REVERSE AND FLOOR IT!
BLACKIE GETS CAUGHT OFF BALANCE!
SKREEEECH!
SO FAR, SO GOOD!

BLUE GETS TO HIS FEET!
VROOOOMM!
I SLAM MY ATV 4x4 INTO FIRST AND PUNCH IT!

I'M STILL ACCELERATING WHEN I HIT HIM, SEND HIM FLYING THIRTY FEET!
CHUDD!
SOMETHING TELLS ME IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE 'N A LOVE TAP TO KEEP HIM DOWN FOR THE COUNT!

BEFORE I CAN GET THE CUFFS ON HIM, HE'S ALREADY COMING TO!
AND HE'S MAD!
IF I DON'T ACT FAST, I'M IN DEEP YOGURT!
GRRRRRR!!!

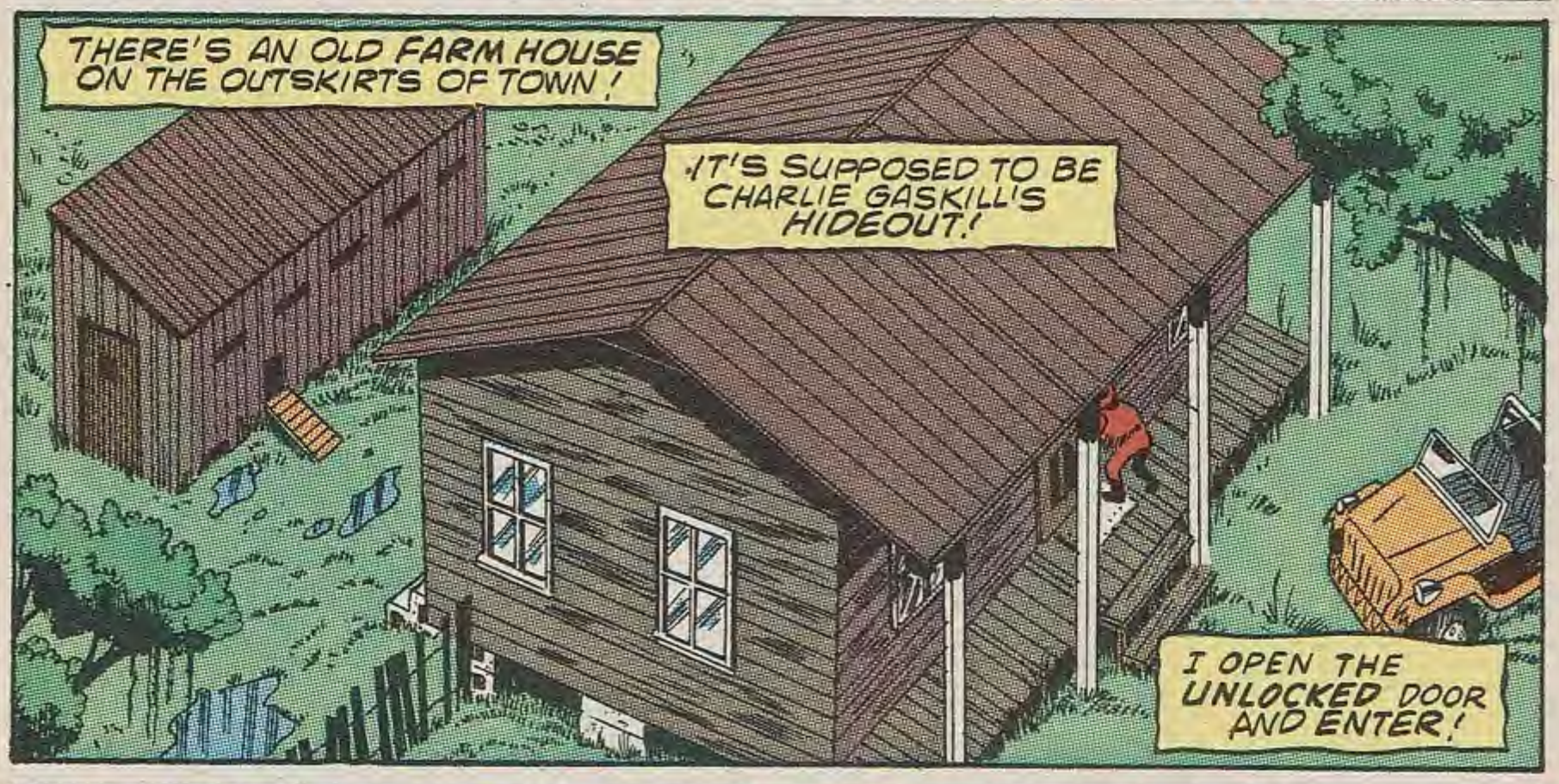
I REACH INSIDE MY BAG O' TRICKS ON MY ROPE BELT, BLIND HIM WITH A BURST OF FLASH-POWDER!
HEADS UP, BRIGHT EYES!
ROARL!
IT'S THE BEST I CAN COME UP WITH ON SHORT NOTICE!

BUT IT GETS THE JOB DONE!
WOUF!
HE GIVES ME A PARTING SHOT AS HE RUNS OFF!

THE TEAM RUSHES OUTSIDE! THEY EXPECT TO FIND BLACKIE BLUE SPLAT IN THE STREET!
THEY FIND ME INSTEAD!
BILLY! WHAT HAPPENED?!
IT'S A LONG STORY!

MEET ME BACK AT THE HOUSE!
WE'LL COMPARE NOTES LATER!

BLACKIE BLUE GOES ON THE BACK BURNER!
I'VE STILL GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH SWAMP GAS CHARLIE!


THERE'S AN OLD FARM HOUSE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN!
IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE CHARLIE GASKILL'S HIDEOUT!
I OPEN THE UNLOCKED DOOR AND ENTER!

IN THE FRIDGE, I FIND A BOTTLE OF MAYONNAISE AND A QUART OF SOUR MILK!
NOBODY LIVES HERE!

I DECIDE TO CHECK OUT THE BACK-YARD!

AND HIT PAYDIRT!
AN OLD CHICKEN COOP'S BEEN CONVERTED INTO A MAKE-SHIFT LAB!
BUT EVERY-THING'S SHUT DOWN, COLD!
IT'S OBVIOUS CHARLIE ONLY WORKS NIGHTS!

I'M DONE PLAYING DETECTIVE... FOR NOW! I GIVE MY GIRL A CALL!
'LO, CHÉRIE! WHERE Y' AT?

HI, BILLY! I WAS JUST LEAVING, GOING OUT THE DOOR!

OH, I'D LOVE TO SEE YOUR NEW HOME!
PICK ME UP AT MY PLACE IN HALF AN HOUR!
BYE BYE!

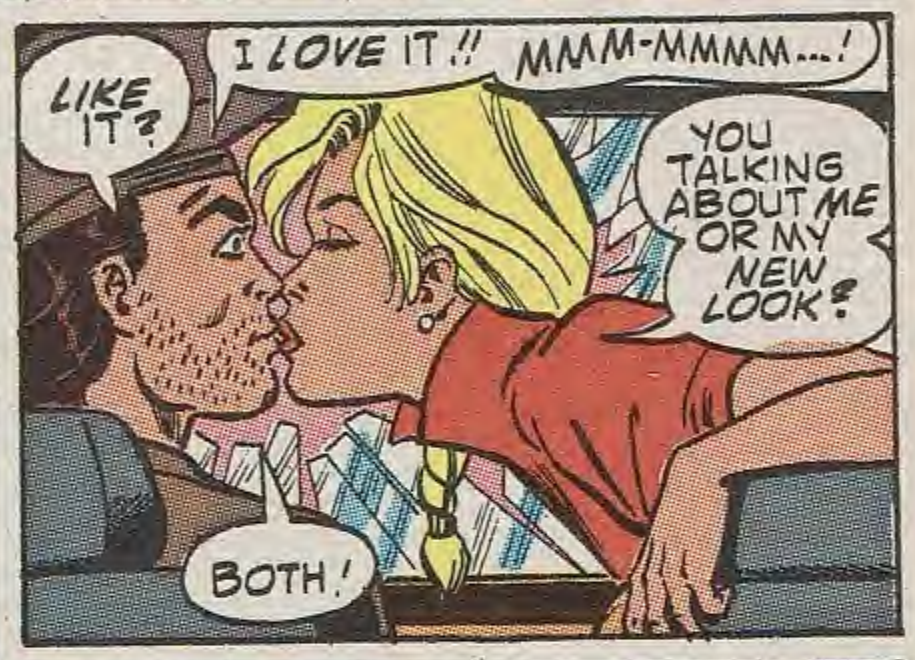
I'M ON TIME! ANNIE ISN'T! WHILE I'M WAITING, I GO THROUGH BLACKIE'S FILE!
I DON'T LIKE WHAT I SEE!
FROM THE NOTES OF DR. HANS MANNHEIM...
I AIN'T NEVER GONNA FRY, VINNIE! I FIGURED OUT HOW!
GOOD FER YOU, BLACKIE! BUT YA NEVER TOLD ME... WHAT MADE YOU BLUE?
"I REQUIRE A HUMAN VOLUNTEER TO TEST A RADICAL NEW MEDICAL PROCEDURE!"
I WAS BEIN' CHASED UP NORTH BY A COSTUMED CRIMEFIGHTER!
ME AN' ANOTHER CON SWAM THROUGH A POOL OF CHEMICALS TRYIN' TO ESCAPE!
"I HAVE STUMBLED UPON A WILLING PROSPECT INCARCERATED IN A STATE PENAL INSTITUTION!"
HIS SKIN GOT DYED WHITE, TURNING HIM INTO A LAUGHING LUNATIC!
BUT THE JOKE WAS ON ME!
I GOT COLORED BLUE AND EXTRADITED TO LOUISIANA ON A MURDER RAP!
"HE IS A CONVICTED KILLER ON DEATH ROW!"
BUT I AIN'T GOIN' TO THE CHAIR!
I'M GONNA BE A GUINEA PIG FOR DOC MANNHEIM'S EXPERIMENTS!
"HIS NICKNAME IS BLACKIE BLUE!"
THAT BUTCHER--?
I'D RATHER GO TO THE CHAIR! SHUDDER! THAN LET HIM GET HIS MEAT HOOKS ON ME!
ARE YOU READY, BLACKIE?

"HE AWAITED ME EAGERLY, ALMOST JOYOUSLY!"
'BOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE, DOC!
OPEN THE CELL, PLEASE, GUARDS!
"ALL HE COULD TALK ABOUT WAS THE IMPENDING SERIES OF GENETIC EXPERIMENTS!"
DON'T FORGET OUR DEAL, DOC!
MY SENTENCE GETS REDUCED TO LIFE FOR THIS!
I SHAN'T FORGET, BLACKIE!
I PROMISE YOU!
"IN THE PRISON LAB, HE WAS MOST WILLING TO COOPERATE!"
GUARDS, PLACE HIM ON THE EXAMINATION TABLE!
FASTEN THE RESTRAINTS TIGHT, PLEASE!
R-RE-RESTRAINTS?!
AIN'TCHA GONNA PUT ME UNDER OR ANYTHING, DOC?!
"IN FACT THE SUBJECT EXPRESSED AN AVID INTEREST IN THE EXPERIMENT!"
RELAX, BLACKIE!
IT'S FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION!
THE HYPODERMIC IS READY, DR. MANNHEIM!
HYPODERMIC?
WHAT HYPODERMIC?!
"I DESIGNED A SPECIAL HYPODERMIC DEVICE FOR ADMINISTERING MY EXPERIMENTAL SERUM!"
IT CONTAINS A RECOMBINANT RNA MEMORY SERUM!
WHEN YOUR CELLS DIE, YOUR BODY SHALL "REMEMBER" WHAT THEY WERE... AND INSTANTLY REGENERATE THEM!
YOU'LL BE INDESTRUCTIBLE! PERHAPS EVEN...
DARE I SAY IT?
IMMORTAL!
"NEEDLESS TO RECOUNT, HIS ENTHUSIASM TO CONTINUE WAS IMMEASURABLE!"
I-I'LL NEVER DIE? BUT... ...BUT I'VE TRADED FOR A LIFE SENTENCE!
I'LL ROT IN HERE FOREVER--!!

"A LOOK OF DELIGHT CROSSED HIS FACE AS THE RNA SERUM FLOODED HIS VEINS!"
COME, COME BLACKIE!
THINK OF THE CONTRIBUTION YOU'LL BE MAKING TO PURE SCIENCE!
NO! DON'T--!
I'VE CHANGED MY MIND!
I WANT OUT OF THIS!
"THEN, SOMETHING WENT WRONG! I SURMISE WHATEVER TOXINS MUTATED HIS CELLS BLUE ADVERSELY AFFECTED THE EXPERIMENT!"
:GASP:
I...
"BLACKIE BLUE UNDERWENT AN AMAZING TRANSFORMATION!"
THAP!
... WANT...
OMIGOSH...!!
THOP!
SNAP!
"THE TEST SUBJECT WAS NO LONGER COMPLETELY HUMAN!"
...OUT!
KRASHH!
"HE LEAPED OUT A LAB WINDOW REINFORCED WITH METAL MESH!"
GUAROS!
"IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE HE WAS GONE!"
INFORM THE WARDEN! TELL HIM WE'VE ENCOUNTERED A SLIGHT PROBLEM!
"MY NURSE SPOKE SOOTHING WORDS TO REASSURE ME!"
DOCTOR! THE SERUM WAS RECOMBINANT! BUT RECOMBINANT WITH WHAT?!
THE MEMORY RNA WAS SPLICED WITH THE GENES OF A FERRET!
GOOD LORD! WE'VE CREATED A MONSTER!
ON THE CONTRARY, MY DEAR!
I AM FATHER TO... A MIRACLE!

BLACKIE BLUE USED TO LIVE IN NEW ORLEANS! THE POLICE HOUNDED HIM BACK HERE!
HOPE I HAVEN'T KEPT YOU WAITING LONG, BILLY!
I MAKE A MENTAL NOTE TO RUN DOWN HIS OLD HANGOUTS TOMORROW!

MY MENTAL NOTE NEVER GETS FILED! ANNABEL FINALLY SHOWS!
SHE'S WORTH THE WAIT!
I THINK THE FRENCH HAVE A WORD FOR IT!
OOO-LA-LA!
LIKE IT?


LIKE IT?
I LOVE IT!! MMM-MMMM...!
YOU TALKING ABOUT ME OR MY NEW LOOK?
BOTH!

I GOT TIRED OF GETTING SWAMP GOO ON MY GOOD CLOTHES, SO I DRESSED DOWN FOR ONCE AND...!

ER, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR WINDSHIELD?
I RAN INTO SOMEBODY WHO TOOK IT PERSONAL!

THE SUN'S GOING DOWN WHEN WE FINALLY ARRIVE!
THE GORDON CRIME FAMILY BLEW UP MY OLD HOUSE!
I CHARGED 'EM TRIPLE DAMAGES --PLUS INTEREST!
BILLY! IT... IT'S BREATH-TAKING!
WAIT'LL YOU SEE THE FRILLS I'VE ADDED, CHERIE!

A MOTOR LAUNCH, A MARSH BOAT, A JET-SKI-- BUT LET'S GO *INSIDE*!

ME AND THE TEAM HAVE TO TALK *BUSINESS*!

ABOUT THE *SOMEBODY* WHO TOOK IT *PERSONAL* YOU RAN INTO?!

I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING! DIDN'T HAVE TO!

ANNIE KNOWS ME TOO WELL!

I'LL WARM UP A POT OF *CHICKORY* COFFEE!

OH, HOW *CUTE*! I DIDN'T REALIZE BILLY WENT IN FOR COLLECTING *ART*!

ART-SHMART, ANN!

BROADSIDE USES 'EM AS *SNARES*! THEY'RE ALL *OVER* THE *PLACE*!

STRANGERS CAN'T RESIST TAKIN' A *POKE* AT 'EM, SETTIN' OFF *TRIP FLARES*!

AND THEY ACTUALLY *WORK*?

ASK *TRACKER*! FIRST TIME HE *SAW* ONE, HE *TRIPPED* IT!

BEAT ON IT WITH HIS *STICK*, HE DID!

MUMBLE-GRUMBLE!

AND WHO'S THAT A *PICTURE* OF?

THAT'S *LAURIE*, BILLY'S WIFE!

HIS... *WIFE*?!?

IT'S GOOD 'N HOT! WHO WANTS A--?

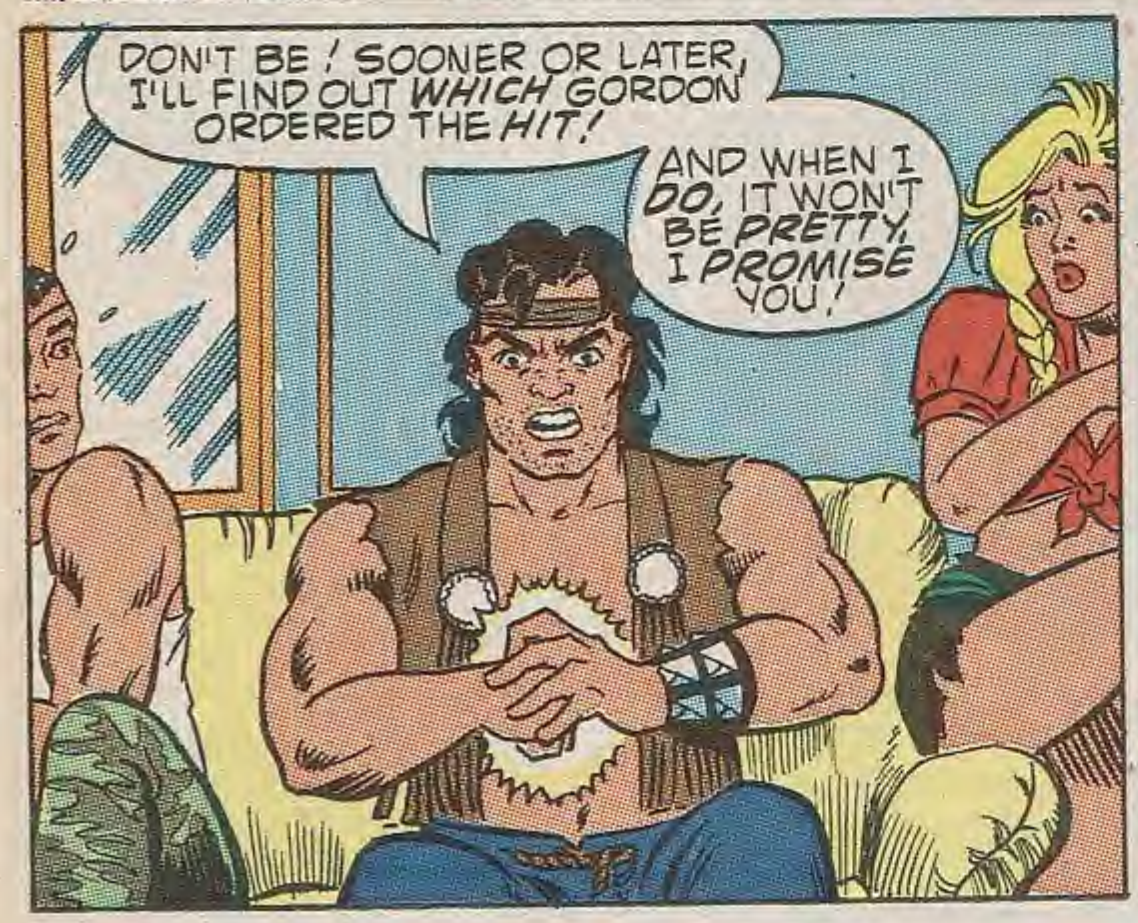
YOU NEVER SAID YOU WERE MARRIED!!
SLAP!

SOMEBODY TOLD YOU 'BOUT LAURIE?
MY FAULT, BILLY! THOUGHT SHE KNEW!
WELL, I DIDN'T!

WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME ALL ABOUT MRS. WEST!
I'D LIKE TO HEAR IT FROM YOUR OWN LIPS!
IT'S TRUE, ANNIE! LAURIE IS MY WIFE!

SHE DIED 'BOUT TWO YEARS AGO! THE GORDONS PUT OUT A CONTRACT ON ME!
THEY GOT HER INSTEAD!
GASP!

BILLY!
I'M... I'M SO SORRY!


DON'T BE! SOONER OR LATER, I'LL FIND OUT WHICH GORDON ORDERED THE HIT!
AND WHEN I DO, IT WON'T BE PRETTY, I PROMISE YOU!

HOW CAN YOU BE CERTAIN IT WAS ONE OF THEM?
I'D BET MY LIFE ON IT!
MY GRUDGE WITH THAT FAMILY GOES WAY BACK!

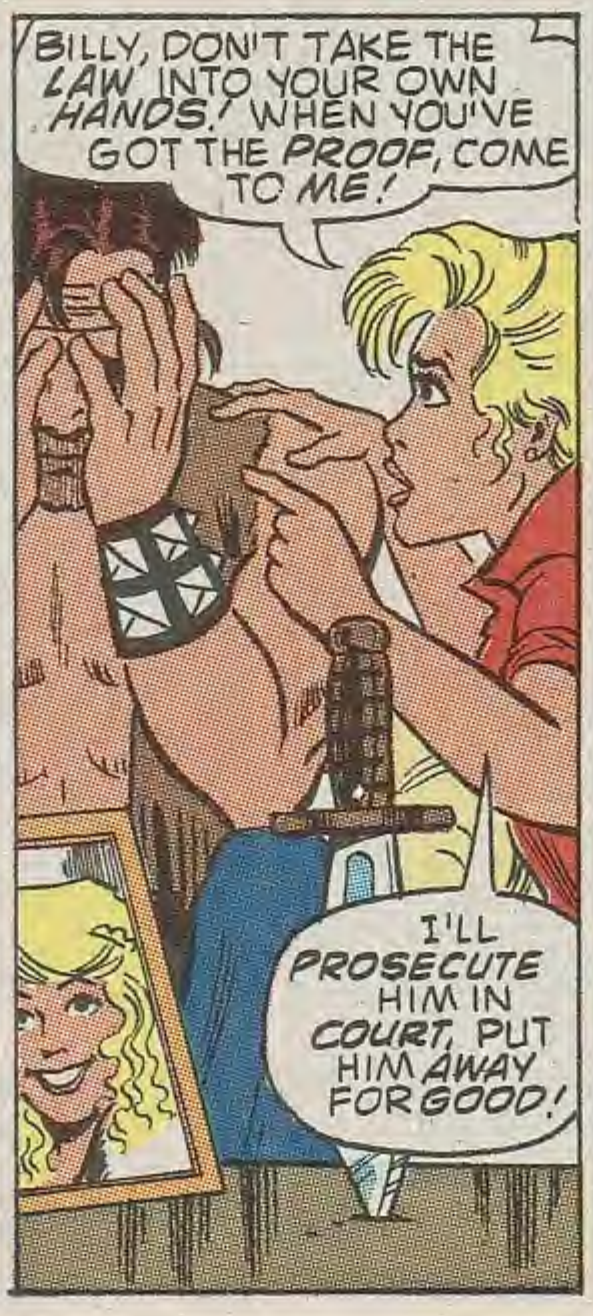
FIRST, THERE'S ROCK GORDON, PETTY RACKETEER! HE RUNS THE LOCAL VICE, LOAN SHARKING, AND GAMBLING OPERATIONS!
I HAD HIM COURT MARTIALED AND BOOTED FROM THE SERVICE! HE SWORE HE'D GET EVEN!

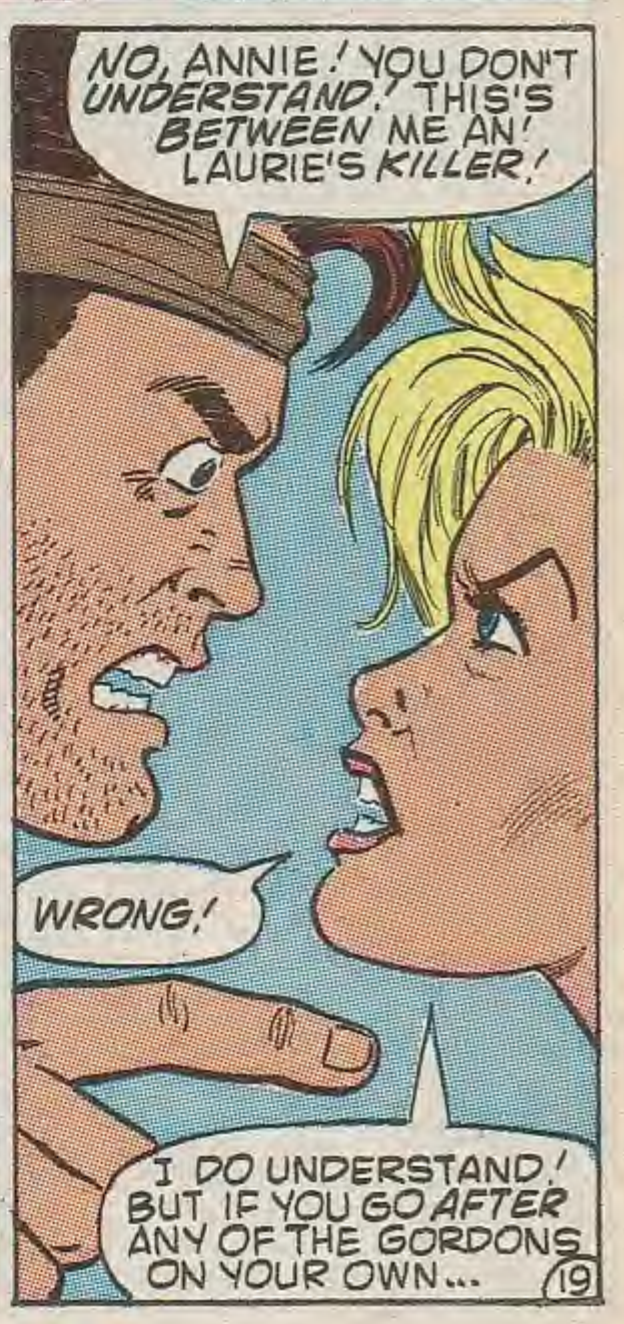
AND THEN THERE'S ROCCO GORDON, HIS STEPBROTHER, RESPONSIBLE FOR INSIDER TRADING AND MONEY LAUNDERING!
HE MIGHT'VE DECIDED TO WHACK ME--AFRAID IF ROCK TRIED SOMETHIN' STUPID, ROCK'D GET CAUGHT!

AND LET'S NOT FORGET GILES "BIG DADDY" GORDON, CRIME BOSS OF NEW ORLEANS! HE OWNS A MUNITIONS FIRM, SELLIN' WEAPONS TO TERRORISTS ON THE SIDE!
HE COULD'VE ORDERED ME GREASED AS A FAMILY FAVOR TO ROCK!

THEY EACH HAD A MOTIVE! I JUST GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHICH ONE'S GUILTY!

AND WHEN I DO--!
THUNK!


BILLY, DON'T TAKE THE LAW INTO YOUR OWN HANDS! WHEN YOU'VE GOT THE PROOF, COME TO ME!
I'LL PROSECUTE HIM IN COURT, PUT HIM AWAY FOR GOOD!


NO, ANNIE! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THIS'S BETWEEN ME AN' LAURIE'S KILLER!
WRONG!
I DO UNDERSTAND! BUT IF YOU GO AFTER ANY OF THE GORDONS ON YOUR OWN...

... HEAVEN HELP ME, AS MUCH AS I CARE ABOUT YOU, I'LL PRESS CHARGES AGAINST YOU MYSELF!
I THINK SHE MEANS IT, BILLY!
I'LL SAY THIS, YOUR CHER'S GOT SPUNK!
!

TRACKER'S HALF CHOCTAW INDIAN! HE SUDDENLY GOES WEIRD ON US!
I'VE SEEN HIM DO IT DOZENS OF TIMES!
I'LL NEVER GET USED TO IT!
TROUBLE, TRACK?
YUP! COMPANY'S COMING! FROM THE OPPOSITE BANK!

PART OF MY HOUSE IS OVER THE WATER! WE RACE OUT ONTO THE DECK!
IT'S PAST SUNDOWN! CAN'T SEE A THING...!
SHOT! HIT THE FLOODS!
CHECK!

THE FLOODLIGHTS SNAP ON! THEY SHOW ME A NIGHTMARE!
SPLOOSH
NYARL!
BLACKIE BLUE ERUPTS FROM THE RIVER LIKE A STEEL COILED SPRING!

HE REACHES OUT AND GRABS ME, JUST LIKE THAT!
MY REFLEXES ARE FAST!
HIS ARE FASTER!

NEXT I KNOW, I'M IN THE WATER!
SPA-BASHH!
BLACKIE IS BUSY CHOKIN' THE AIR OUTTA ME!

INSTINCTIVELY I GO FOR MY KNIFE!
I DON'T HAVE IT!
I LEFT IT PLANTED IN MY COFFEE TABLE!

CONTINUED

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THERE'S A CARDINAL RULE I LEARNED IN THE ARMY!
ALWAYS KEEP YOUR WEAPON WITH YOU!
I BROKE THE RULE!
THE PRICE IS GONNA BE MY LIFE!

SOMETHING'S GOT BILLY! IT'S HOLDING HIM UNDER!
THING IS RIGHT! THAT'S BLACKIE BLUE!
QUICK!
WE NEED STEAKS AND CHOPS FROM THE FREEZER!

RAW MEAT? I DON'T UNDERSTAND?!
JUST DO IT! HURRY...!

THIS'LL ATTRACT THE HUNGRY 'GATORS!
ALLIGATORS!
BUT WHAT ABOUT BILLY?
HE WEARS A SECRET SALVE...
KEEPS THE CRITTERS AWAY!
THEY WON'T TOUCH HIM, IN THEORY!
SPLASH!
SPLASH!!
SPLASH!
SPLUT!

I'M AT THE EDGE OF PASSING OUT WHEN I SEE A FROZEN T-BONE DRIFTING MY WAY!

I START CLUBBING HIM WITH IT!
TALK ABOUT DROWNING MEN CLUTCHING AT STRAWS!

IT'S NO GO!
I'M IN A CHOKE HOLD I CAN'T BREAK!
I'M SINKING FAST!
MY LAST THOUGHT-- AND IT'S A PUN! SOME EPITAPH!

JUST THEN, A GIANT GATER RAMS BLACKIE OFF ME!

IT'S THE SIZE OF A TORPEDO

FA-WHUMP!

MOVIN' FAST AS ONE, TOO!

OTHER GATORS GATHER 'ROUND!

THEY WANT IN ON THE ACTION!

ME, I GOT OTHER THINGS ON MY MIND!

LIKE AIR! I GULP DOWN A COUPLE GALLONS OF IT!

BILLY! TAKE AHOLD! I'LL PULL YOU UP!

THERE'S A ROPE LADDER WAITIN' FOR ME, THANKS TO BROADSIDE!

KOFF KAFF KOFF

I HANG ON! 'SIDE PUTS HIS BACK INTO IT! I'M ALONG FOR THE RIDE!

I DON'T HAVE THE STRENGTH TO SWAT A FLY!

I... I WAS SO WORRIED! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'M ALIVE! :KAFF: THAT'S GOTTA COUNT FOR SOMETHIN', DARLIN'!

THERE'S A BIG SPLASH! THE WATER CHURNS TO FOAM! EVERYONE'S CHEER-IN' THE GATORS!

'CEPT ME!

I READ BLACKIE'S FILE!

MY MONEY'S ON HIM!

AND JUST LIKE THAT, IT'S OVER!

A DARK SHAPE LEAVES THE RIVER AND SLINKS INTO THE DARK-NESS!

I DON'T NEED A CRYSTAL BALL TO KNOW WHO IT IS!

WHAT DO YOU THINK, TRACK?

THE 'GATOR'S HURT HIM, BILLY! HURT HIM BAD! BUT--!

BUT?

BUT I'VE A GUT FEELING HE'LL BE BACK!

CONTINUED

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I TAKE IT THAT'S THE GUY YOU HIT WHO TOOK IT PERSONAL?
REAL PERSONAL, SUGAR! IT'S A LONG STORY...!

WE TALK ABOUT BLACKIE OVER A POT OF RE-HEATED COFFEE! THEY'RE NOT HAPPY WITH WHAT I SAY!
BLACKIE'S HALF ANIMAL-- --UNKILLABLE-- AN' NOW HE'S HUNTIN' US! 'STEAD OF THE OTHER WAY 'ROUND!
I WAS GONNA BUST SWAMP GAS CHARLIE! BUT THAT'S OUT--WITH BLUE RUNNIN' WILD!

ANY SUGGESTIONS?

YUP! GET HIM BEFORE HE GETS US!
GOES DOUBLE FOR ME!
I SECOND THE MOTION!
UH, I'VE AN IDEA!

STEP ONE: LAY A FAKE TRAIL TO CHARLIE GASKILL'S!
STEP TWO: BLACKIE FOLLOWS THE TRAIL!
STEP THREE: BLACKIE AND GASKILL BEAT THE STUFFINGS OUT OF EACH OTHER!

STEP FOUR: BILLY WALKS IN AND PICKS UP THE PIECES!
STEP FIVE: I GET TREATED TO DINNER WITH THE REWARD MONEY!
SIMPLE, NO?

!
?
?!
!!

SEE, I TOLD YOU FELLAS SHE HAD BRAINS!
AND HERE I THOUGHT YOU WERE CAPTIVATED BY MY LOOKS!
SMACK!
WELL, THAT, TOO...!

I DISMISS THE TEAM, BRING ANNIE BACK TO HER PLACE! STRINGS GET PULLED FOR POLICE PROTECTION, 'CASE BLACKIE SHOWS UP ON HER DOORSTEP!

BE CAREFUL, BILLY!

YOU TOO, CHERIE!

FOLLOWING DAY, I PACK A SUITCASE WITH DIRTY LAUNDRY! I'VE GOT SOCKS THAT HAVEN'T BEEN WASHED IN A MONTH!

NO, MAKE THAT TWO!

ONCE **BLUE** CATCHES A WHIFF, HE'LL BE ABLE TO FOLLOW MY TRAIL BLINDFOLDED!

IF THE STINK DON'T GET HIM FIRST...!

GOOD THING SWAMP GAS CHARLIE WEARS A GASMASK! IT'S THE ONLY WAY HE'LL SURVIVE THE **SMELL**!

I TIE THE SUITCASE TO THE BACK OF A BILLY-MOBILE AND DRIVE OVER TO CHARLIE GASKILL'S FARM!

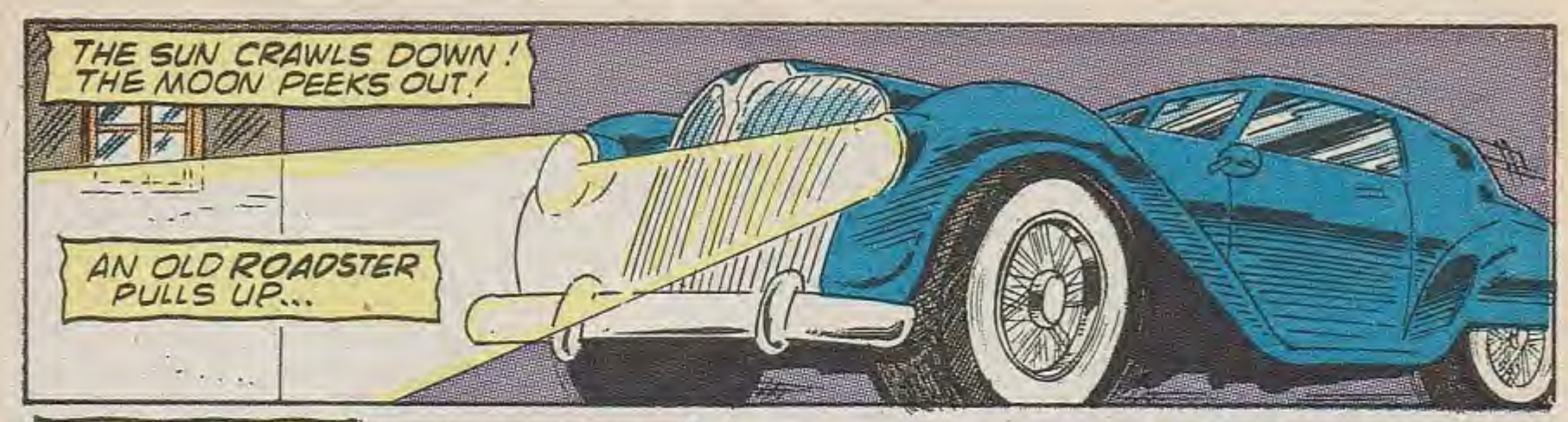
FOR GOOD MEASURE, I DO SEVERAL LAPS AROUND THE CHICKEN COOP LAB!

I'M GRINNIN' LIKE A FOOL THE WHOLE TIME

IT'S DAYS LIKE THIS I REALLY ENJOY MY WORK!

I STASH THE JEEP IN THE WOODS AND CLIMB A TREE!

I SETTLE IN, CHECKING MY **WATCH**, WAITING FOR NIGHTFALL!


THE SUN CRAWLS DOWN! THE MOON PEEKS OUT!
AN OLD ROADSTER PULLS UP...

..AND SWAMP GAS CHARLIE GETS OUT!
:AHHHH:

CHARLIE ENTERS THE LAB AND FIRES UP HIS TEST TUBES! OFF IN THE DISTANCE, I HEAR FOOTSTEPS!
RUNNIN' FOOTSTEPS!
GETTIN' LOUDER AN' LOUDER AN' LOUDER!
PITTER-PAT! PITTER-PAT!
PITTER PAT!
WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT?
IT'S BLACKIE BLUE, HOT ON MY SCENT!

HE DOESN'T STOP TO KNOCK!
BRAK-K!
HE JUST SMASHES THROUGH THE COOP DOOR LIKE CARD-BOARD!

OUTSIDE, I DROP DOWN TO WATCH!
INSIDE, IT'S TOTAL CONFUSION!
NYARL!!
AHHHHH?
NEITHER IS EXPECTIN' THE OTHER!

ONCE BLACKIE'S PUMPED, THERE'S NO STOPPIN' HIM!
HE CHARGES FORWARD!
GASKILL REACHES IN HIS COAT POCKET, GOIN' FOR HIS GAS GRENADES!
THIS SHOWDOWN'S GONNA BE CLASSIC...!

CHARLIE CUTS LOOSE WITH EVERYTHING HE'S PACKIN'!

THERE'S TEAR GAS!

WHUMP!

MUSTARD GAS!

SHH-FOOM!

KNOCKOUT GAS!

FOP!

DELIRIUM GAS!

WHOOM!

NERVE GAS, EVEN!

KA CHOOM!

BLACKIE'S HAD HIS FILL!

HE GIVES CHARLIE A BACK-HANDED SLAP...

FWAP!

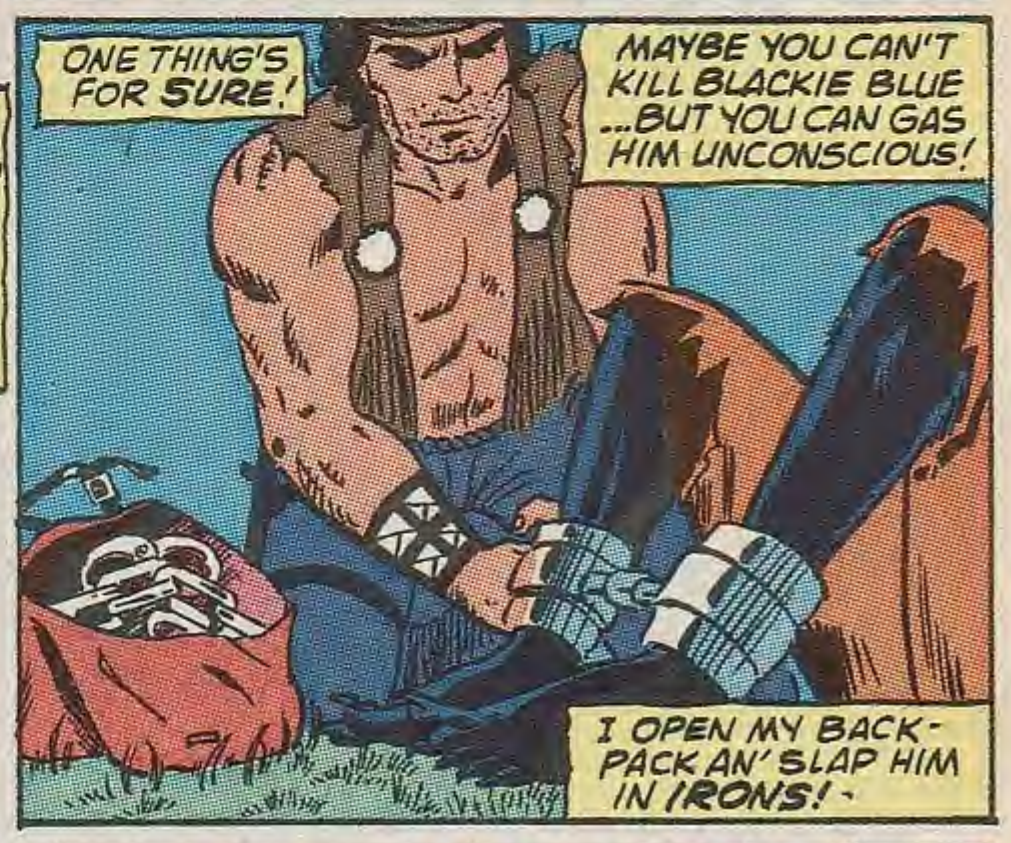
-AHHH..!-

... AND CRASHES OUT THE BACK DOOR WITH A BIG BANG!

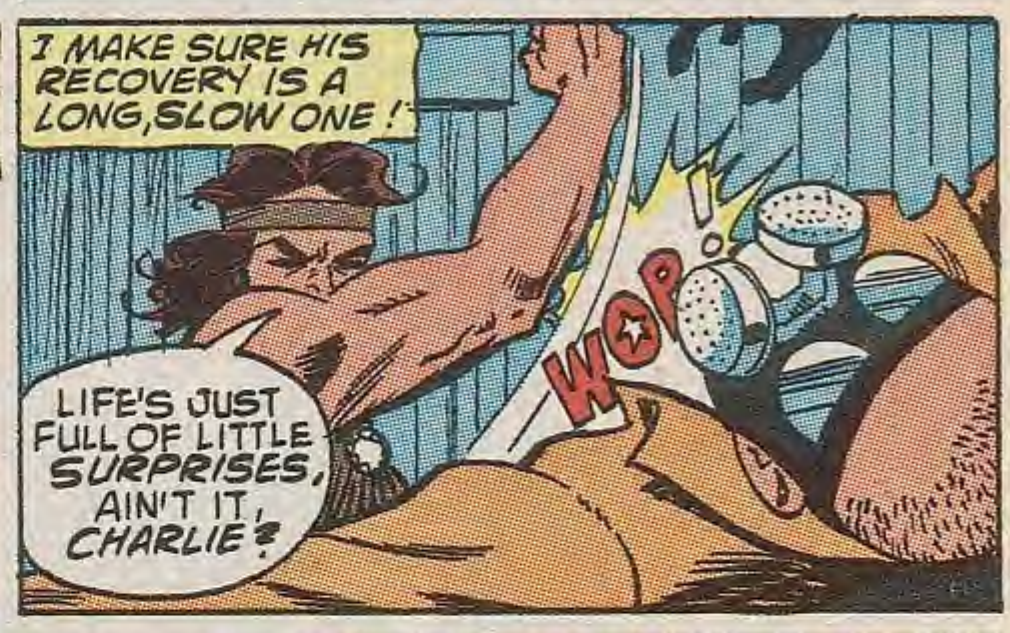
KER-BASH!

I'M THERE WAITIN' ON HIM! OUR EYES LOCK!
HE STARTS COMIN' AT ME!
FOR A SECOND, I DON'T THINK THIS IS SUCH A GREAT IDEA...

...BEFORE HE PASSES OUT RIGHT AT MY FEET!
NYRL...
FUMP!


ONE THING'S FOR SURE!
MAYBE YOU CAN'T KILL BLACKIE BLUE ...BUT YOU CAN GAS HIM UNCONSCIOUS!
I OPEN MY BACK-PACK AN' SLAP HIM IN IRONS!

IN THE LAB, GASKILL IS JUST RECOVERING FROM BLACKIE'S BLOW!
BAYOU BILLY! :AHHH:
SO YOU'RE BEHIND THIS!!


I MAKE SURE HIS RECOVERY IS A LONG, SLOW ONE!
LIFE'S JUST FULL OF LITTLE SURPRISES, AIN'T IT, CHARLIE?
WOP

ON THE WAY INTO TOWN, THEY BOTH COME TO!
THEY'RE NOT PLEASED WITH THE SEATING ARRANGEMENTS!
BILLY! KEEP YOUR :AHHHH: PET AWAY FROM ME!
GRRR RRRRR!
DON'T RILE HIM, SWAMP GAS!
HE HASN'T HAD HIS SHOTS YET!
LORDY, BUT I DO LOVE MY WORK...!

NEXT ISSUE: BAYOU BILLY BEGINS A SPECIAL QUEST! AND JUST WHO IS THUGS "TWO-HEAD" McGRAW?! Keep sending your letters to: SWAMP SAYIN'S c/o ARCHIE COMICS 325 Fayette Ave., Mamaroneck, N.Y. 10543

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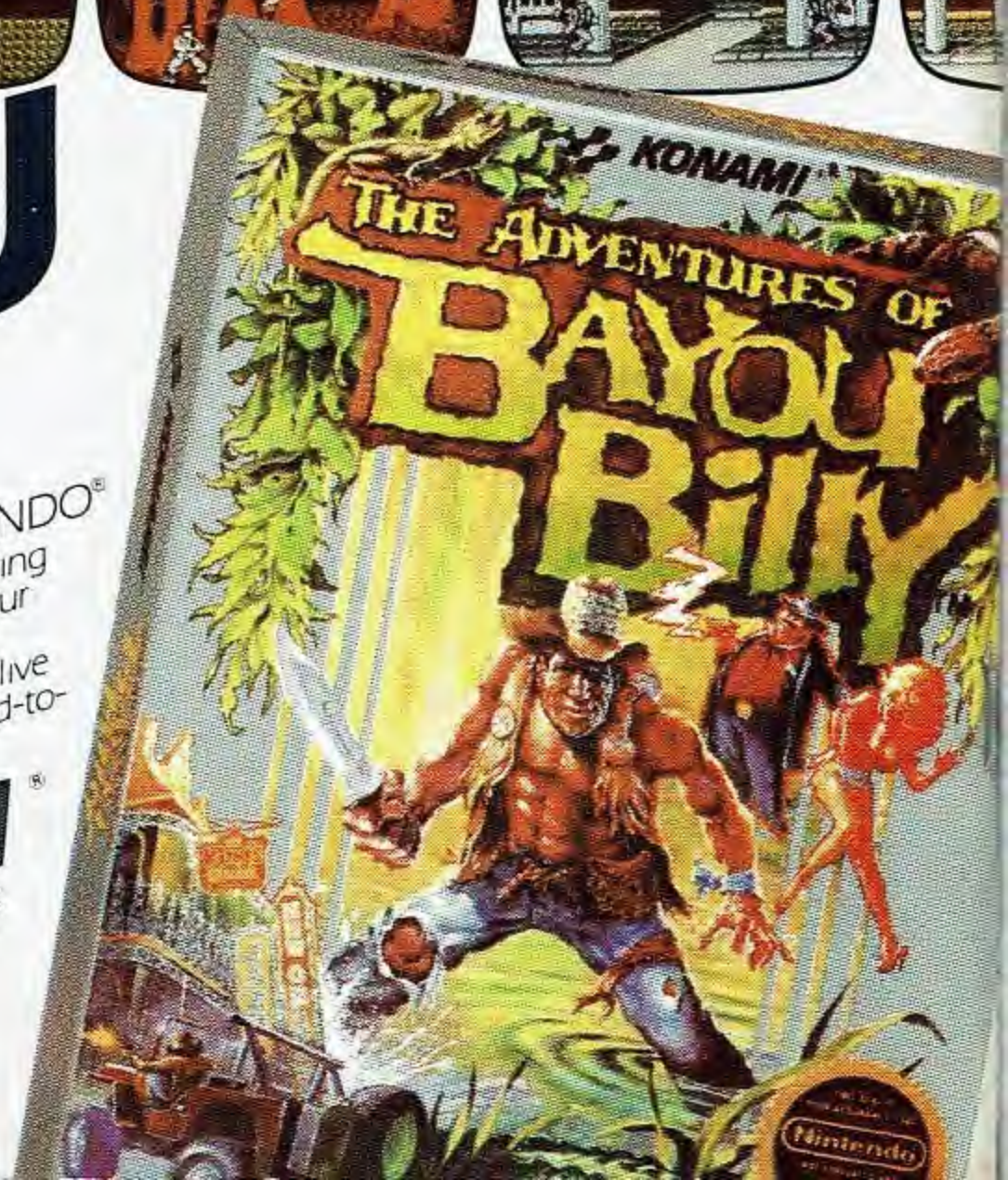
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